Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 16-36 are pending in the application, with claims 16, 20 and 21 being the independent claims. Claim 18 is sought to be amended. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

I. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Richetta

Claims 16-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over United States No. 5,579,307 to Richetta (herein "Richetta"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection and provides the following arguments to support patentability.

Richetta does not teach or suggest each and every feature of claim 16. For example, as to be discussed below, Richetta does not teach or suggest at least the features of "a pre-processor to receive a packet header of an incoming packet, the packet header including a field, and to assign an associated identifier to the field" as recited by claim 16. Therefore, the Office Action fails to disclose a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Richetta discloses "systems that route packets of information between nodes in a communication system." (*see*, Richetta, col. 1, lines 20-22). The system of Richetta includes routing tables having routing instructions that "direct a data packet to an exit

link based on a destination of the data packet." (*see*, Richetta, col. 8, lines 34-36). More specifically, a "stream of data packets is received at a communication node." (*see*, Richetta, col. 15, lines 59-60). A "routing table identifier and a routing code *is read* from a first data packet from" the received data packets. (*emphasis added, see*, Richetta, col. 15, lines 65-67). A "routing table corresponding to the routing table identifier is selected." (*see*, Richetta, col. 16, lines 34-35). Once a routing table is selected, the system of Richetta "reads an exit link specified in the routing table based on [the routing] code." (*see*, Richetta, col. 17, lines 21-23). The data packet is then "put in a queue for routing over the exit link." (*see*, Richetta, col. 16, lines 33-34).

Claim 16 recites at least the feature of "a pre-processor to receive a packet header of an incoming packet, the packet header including a field, and *to assign an associated identifier to the field.*" (*emphasis added, see*, claim 16). Assigning an identifier to the field reduces the number of bits that need to be compared during packet classification. This can result in a substantial savings in computational comparisons. (*see*, Applicant's Published App., para. [0038]). Richetta simply fails to teach assigning an identifier to a field. As a consequence, Richetta does not reduce the number of bits having to be compared in order to classify a packet. Richetta therefore suffers from the same problems discussed in the Background Section of Applicant's specification.

Accordingly, Richetta does not teach or suggest at least the feature of "a pre-processor to receive a packet header of an incoming packet, the packet header including a field, and to assign an associated identifier to the field" as recited by claim 16. Dependent claims 17-19 are likewise not rendered obvious by Richetta for the same reasons as claim 16 from which they respectively depend and further in view of their

own respective features. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 16-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Richetta does not teach or suggest each and every feature of claim 20. For example, as discussed above in regards to claim 16, Richetta does not teach or suggest at least the features of "assigning an associated identifier to the field" as recited by claim 20. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

II. Other Matters

Allowed Claims

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 21-36 in the Office Action.

Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance

Applicant notes the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance presented on page 4 of the Office Action. Applicant reserves the right to demonstrate claims 21-36 are allowable over the art made of record for further reasons related to any of their recited features. Applicant further contends that reservation of this right does not give rise to any implication regarding whether the Applicant agrees with or acquiesces in the reasoning provided by the Examiner.

Atty. Dkt. No. 2875.1070001

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicant believes that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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